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Reds Hinting Viet War Now At Stalemate

By Larry Green

SAIGON — (CDN) — The Vietnamese Communists today suggested a new flexibility in their negotiation position at the Paris peace talks while implying that the war in South Vietnam had reached a stalemate.

In a statement broadcast by various Communist radio stations in Southeast Asia throughout the day the Provisional Revolutionary Government for South Vietnam said:

"We are ready to agree with the U.S. government on the fact that neither a Communist regime nor a U.S. lackey administration can be imposed on South Vietnam, and (we are) ready to accept a provisional national concord government without control by any side."

Viewpoint

Ranking analysts here said the statement was "not a breakthrough but rather a change of viewpoint."

"It does seem to indicate some flexibility," one high source said.

In Washington, presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler would say only that "we are studying it." He declined to say whether administration officials found any new or encouraging language in the Viet Cong statement.

If the analysts here are correct, it is the first important change in the Communist negotiation position since peace talks began in 1968.

The Communists thought the statement important enough to repeat both on Viet Cong and Hanoi radio broadcasts, an honor usually

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reserved for key policy papers.

While the statement again calls for the ouster of South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu, intelligence sources here said there are indications the Communists are also preparing to modify their hard line stand on this issue.

In recent weeks, these sources said, Viet Cong cadres throughout South Vietnam have been "psychologically prepared by Communist propaganda" for the possibility that Thieu will remain in office, perhaps as part of a coalition

government.

The statement says the Provisional Revolutionary Government will accept "members of the Saigon administration," as one arm of a three-part coalition government although they specifically say Thieu cannot be part of it. But the "Saigon Administration is Thieu's government with or without him," the statement said.

The communists also say they are ready to negotiate as to who will be included in the third arm of the coalition government.

Analysts say the statement appeared to be part of a gradual shift in Communist negotiating strategy.

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